



Texas Department of Insurance

Division of Workers' Compensation

Medical Fee Dispute Resolution, MS-48

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AMMENDED MEDICAL FEE DISPUTE RESOLUTION FINDINGS AND DECISION

GENERAL INFORMATION

Requestor Name and Address

TEXAS ORTHOPEDIC HOSPITAL
c/o HOLLOWAY & GUMBERT
3701 KIRBY DRIVE, SUITE 1288
HOUSTON TX 77098-3926

Carrier's Austin Representative Box

01

MFDR Date Received

JUNE 8, 2006

Respondent Name

LIBERTY MUTUAL FIRE INSURANCE

MFDR Tracking Number

M4-06-6440-02

REQUESTOR'S POSITION SUMMARY

Requestor's Position Summary dated March 17, 2006: "Our client has advised that the above-referenced claim has not been properly paid. Specifically, per Rule 134.401(c)(6)(A)(i)(iii), once the bill has reached the minimum stop-loss threshold of \$40K, the entire admission will be paid using the stop-loss reimbursement factor ('SLRF') of 75%."

Requestor's Position Summary dated June 7, 2006: "Texas Orthopedic Hospital billed its usual and customary charges for its services. The total sum billed was \$46,435.57...Per Rule 134.401(c)(6)(A)(i)(iii), once the bill has reached the minimum stop-loss threshold of \$40K, the entire admission will be paid using the stop-loss reimbursement factor ('SLRF') of 75%...reimbursement for the entire admission including charges for items in (c)(4) is calculated by the stop-loss reimbursement factor stated in the ACIHFG, i.e., 75%. Furthermore, separate reimbursement for items listed under Rule 134.401(c)(4) is improper and illegal when the amount of the claim is \$40,000.00 or greater... the fees paid by Liberty Mutual Insurance do not conform to the reimbursement section of Rule 134.401...it is the position of Texas Orthopedic Hospital that all charges relating to the admission of [Claimant] are due and payable as provided for under Texas law and the Rules of the Division, as currently adopted and published at 28 TAC §134.400, *et seq.*"

Requestor's Position Summary dated June 19, 2006: "please find enclosed the Affidavit of Vanessa East that is relevant to the medical care and treatment provided to [Claimant] at Texas Orthopedic Hospital, which was inadvertently omitted from the documentation submitted in our original request for MDR packet dated June 7, 2006."

Amount in Dispute: \$26,055.78

RESPONDENT'S POSITION SUMMARY

Respondent's Position Summary dated June 21, 2006: "The inpatient stay should only be paid as stop loss if BC>\$40,000.00 and the stay represents 'unusually extensive services'. The bill was reviewed and there does not appear to be any unusual extensive services provided during the admission. The claimant was admitted on 6/10/05 and discharged 6/15/05, staying a total of 5 days. Preauthorization was only obtained for 4 of the 5 days. TWCC Rule 134.600 required that both preauthorization and continued stay review is obtained for all inpatient services. One day was not authorized."

Respondent's Position Summary dated June 28, 2006: "The additional information has been reviewed and our position remains the same."

Responses Submitted by: Liberty Mutual Insurance Co.

Respondent's Position Summary dated November 30, 2011: "Requestor has failed to meet the Austin Third Court of Appeals' mandate that, to qualify for reimbursement under the Stop-Loss Exception (former 28 Tex. Admin. Code §134.401(c)(6)) a hospital must demonstrate two things: the services it provided during the admission were unusually costly and unusually extensive, and its total audited charges exceeded \$40,000...Because Requestor has not met its burden of demonstrating unusually extensive services, and the documentation adduced thus far fails to provide any rationale for the Requestor's qualification for payment under the Stop-Loss Exception, Respondent appropriately issued payment per the standard Texas surgical per diem rate. No additional monies are due to the Requestor."

Response Submitted by: Hanna & Plaut, LLP

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

| Disputed Dates | Disputed Services | Amount In Dispute | Amount Due |
|--|-----------------------------|-------------------|------------|
| June 10, 2005 through June 15, 2005 | Inpatient Hospital Services | \$26,055.78 | \$619.97 |

FINDINGS AND DECISION

This **amended** findings and decision supersedes all previous decisions rendered in this medical payment dispute involving the above requestor and respondent.

This medical fee dispute is decided pursuant to Texas Labor Code §413.031 and all applicable, adopted rules of the Texas Department of Insurance, Division of Workers' Compensation.

Background

1. 28 Texas Administrative Code §133.305 and §133.307, 27 *Texas Register* 12282, applicable to requests filed on or after January 1, 2003, sets out the procedures for resolving medical fee disputes.
2. 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.401, 22 Texas Register 6264, effective August 1, 1997, sets out the fee guidelines for inpatient services rendered in an acute care hospital for the date of admission in dispute.
 - Effective July 13, 2008, the Division's rule at former 28 Texas Administrative Code § 134.401 was repealed. The repeal adoption preamble specified, in pertinent part: "Section 134.401 will continue to apply to reimbursements related to admissions prior to March 1, 2008." 33 Texas Register 5319, 5220 (July 4, 2008).
 - Former 28 Texas Administrative Code § 134.401(a)(1) specified, in pertinent part: "This guidelines shall become effective August 1, 1997. The Acute Care Inpatient Hospital Fee Guideline (ACIHFG) is applicable for all reasonable and medically necessary medical and/or surgical inpatient services rendered after the Effective Date of this rule in an acute care hospital to injured workers under the Texas Workers' Compensation Act." 22 Texas Register 6264, 6306 (July 4, 1997).
3. Former 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.600, effective March 14, 2004, 29 TexReg 2349, requires preauthorization for specific healthcare treatment and services.
4. The services in dispute were reduced / denied by the respondent with the following reason codes:

Explanation of Benefits

- F, Z560-The charge for this procedure exceeds the fee schedule or usual and customary allowance.
- C, P303-This service was reviewed in accordance with your contract.
- PA-First Health Network
- M, Z585-The charge for this procedure exceeds fair and reasonable.
- F, Z695-The charge for this hospitalization have been reduced based on the fee schedule allowance.
- X394-Our position remains the same; if you disagree with our decision please contact the TWCC medical dispute resolution.

Issues

1. Does the submitted documentation support a preauthorization issue exists in this dispute?
2. Did the audited charges exceed \$40,000.00?
3. Did the admission in dispute involve unusually extensive services?
4. Did the admission in dispute involve unusually costly services?
5. Is the requestor entitled to additional reimbursement?

Findings

This dispute relates to inpatient surgical services provided in a hospital setting with reimbursement subject to the provisions of Division rule at 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.401, titled *Acute Care Inpatient Hospital Fee Guideline*, effective August 1, 1997, 22 Texas Register 6264. The Third Court of Appeals' November 13, 2008 opinion in *Texas Mutual Insurance Company v. Vista Community Medical Center, LLP*, 275 South Western Reporter Third 538, 550 (Texas Appeals – Austin 2008, petition denied) addressed a challenge to the interpretation of 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.401. The Court concluded that “to be eligible for reimbursement under the Stop-Loss Exception, a hospital must demonstrate that the total audited charges exceed \$40,000 and that an admission involved unusually costly and unusually extensive services.” Both the requestor and respondent in this case were notified via form letter that the mandate for the decision cited above was issued on January 19, 2011. Each was given the opportunity to supplement their original MDR submission, position or response as applicable. The documentation filed by the requestor and respondent to date will be considered in determining whether the admission in dispute is eligible for reimbursement under the stop-loss method of payment. Consistent with the Third Court of Appeals' November 13, 2008 opinion, the division will address whether the total audited charges **in this case** exceed \$40,000; whether the admission and disputed services **in this case** are unusually extensive; and whether the admission and disputed services **in this case** are unusually costly. 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.401(c)(2)(C) states, in pertinent part, that “Independent reimbursement is allowed on a case-by-case basis if the particular case exceeds the stop-loss threshold as described in paragraph (6) of this subsection.” 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.401(c)(6) puts forth the requirements to meet the three factors that will be discussed.

1. Per former 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.600(h), “The non-emergency health care requiring preauthorization includes: (1) inpatient hospital admissions including the principal scheduled procedure(s) and the length of stay.”

The respondent states that “Preauthorization was only obtained for 4 of the 5 days. TWCC Rule 134.600 required that both preauthorization and continued stay review is obtained for all inpatient services. One day was not authorized.”

The requestor did not submit documentation to support preauthorization was obtained for the additional day; therefore, reimbursement cannot be recommended for the additional day.

2. 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.401(c)(6)(A)(i) states “to be eligible for stop-loss payment the total audited charges for a hospital admission must exceed \$40,000, the minimum stop-loss threshold.” Furthermore, (A) (v) of that same section states “Audited charges are those charges which remain after a bill review by the insurance carrier has been performed.” Review of the explanation of benefits issued by the carrier finds that the carrier did not deduct any charges in accordance with §134.401(c)(6)(A)(v); therefore the audited charges equal \$46,435.39. The division concludes that the total audited charges exceed \$40,000.
3. The requestor in its position statement presumes that it is entitled to the stop loss method of payment because the audited charges exceed \$40,000. As noted above, the Third Court of Appeals in its November 13, 2008 opinion rendered judgment to the contrary. The Court concluded that “to be eligible for reimbursement under the Stop-Loss Exception, a hospital must demonstrate that the total audited charges exceed \$40,000 and that an admission involved...unusually extensive services.” The requestor failed to demonstrate that the particulars of the admission in dispute constitute unusually extensive services; therefore, the division finds that the requestor did not meet 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.401(c)(6).
4. In regards to whether the services were unusually costly, the requestor presumes that because the bill exceeds \$40,000, the stop loss method of payment should apply. The Third Court of Appeals' November 13, 2008 opinion concluded that in order to be eligible for reimbursement under the stop-loss exception, a hospital must **demonstrate** that an admission involved unusually costly services thereby affirming 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.401(c)(6) which states that “Stop-loss is an independent reimbursement

methodology established to ensure fair and reasonable compensation to the hospital for unusually costly services rendered during treatment to an injured worker.” The requestor failed to demonstrate that the particulars of the admission in dispute constitutes unusually costly services; therefore, the division finds that the requestor failed to meet 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.401(c)(6).

5. 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.401(b)(2)(A) titled General Information states, in pertinent part, that “The basic reimbursement for acute care hospital inpatient services rendered shall be the lesser of:
- (i) a rate for workers’ compensation cases pre-negotiated between the carrier and the hospital;
 - (ii) the hospital’s usual and customary charges; and
 - (iii) reimbursement as set out in section (c) of this section for that admission

In regards to a pre-negotiated rate, the services in dispute were reduced in part with the explanation “This service was reviewed in accordance with your contract.” No documentation was provided to support that a reimbursement rate was negotiated between the workers’ compensation insurance carrier Liberty Mutual Fire Insurance and Texas Orthopedic Hospital prior to the services being rendered; therefore 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.401(b)(2)(A)(i) does not apply.

In regards to the hospital’s usual and customary charges in this case, review of the medical bill finds that the health care provider’s usual and customary charges equal \$46,435.39.

In regards to reimbursement set out in (c), the division determined that the requestor failed to support that the services in dispute are eligible for the stop-loss method of reimbursement; therefore 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.401(c)(1), titled Standard Per Diem Amount, and §134.401(c)(4), titled Additional Reimbursements, apply. The division notes that additional reimbursements under §134.401(c)(4) apply only to bills that do not reach the stop-loss threshold described in subsection (c)(6) of this section.

- Review of the submitted documentation finds that the services provided were surgical; therefore the standard per diem amount of \$1,118.00 per day applies. Division rule at 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.401(c)(3)(ii) states, in pertinent part, that “The applicable Workers’ Compensation Standard Per Diem Amount (SPDA) is multiplied by the length of stay (LOS) for admission.” The length of stay was five days; however, documentation supports that the Carrier pre-authorized a length of stay of four days in accordance with 28 Texas Administrative Code Rule §134.600. Consequently, the per diem rate allowed is \$4,472.00.00 for the four authorized days.
- 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.401(c)(4)(A), states “When medically necessary the following services indicated by revenue codes shall be reimbursed at cost to the hospital plus 10%: (i) Implantables (revenue codes 275, 276, and 278), and (ii) Orthotics and prosthetics (revenue code 274).” Review of the requestor’s medical bill finds that the following items were billed under revenue code 278 and are therefore eligible for separate payment under §134.401(c)(4)(A):

| Description of Implant per Itemized Statement | Quantity | Cost Per Unit | Cost + 10% |
|---|----------|-----------------------------|------------|
| SNI Fix Bolt Cann 1006 | 2 | \$14.00 | \$30.80 |
| SNI Fix Bolt Slot 1007 | 2 | \$15.25 | \$33.55 |
| SNI Bolt 10mm 103200 | 2 | \$1.24 | \$2.73 |
| SNI Bolt 20mm 103203 | 3 | \$1.24 | \$4.09 |
| SNI Anch Wsh Con 20170 | 44 | \$11.63 | \$562.89 |
| SNI Nut 10mm 103300 | 46 | \$1.24 | \$62.74 |
| SNI Nut 4 Pt D/C 10330 | 1 | \$27.45 | \$30.20 |
| SNI Socket Thr 60 1009 | 2 | \$21.00 | \$46.20 |
| SNI Wire 1.8X370 10210 | 3 | \$22.06 | \$72.80 |
| SNI Wire Olv 1.8 10210 | 2 | \$88.96 | \$795.71 |
| SNI Rod Thr 150 102304 | 4 | \$9.77 | \$42.99 |
| SNI Rod Thr 200 102305 | 6 | \$12.81 | \$84.55 |
| SNI Suprt Conn 201300 | 2 | No support for cost/invoice | \$0.00 |

| | | | |
|-------------------------|---|-----------------------------|------------|
| SNI Pin Hf 6X80 122733 | 2 | No support for cost/invoice | \$0.00 |
| SNR Cube Ranch 1H 1034 | 2 | \$71.86 | \$158.09 |
| SNR Sleeve Centr 6 1034 | 2 | \$48.00 | \$105.60 |
| SNI Set Screw 112727 | 2 | \$1.43 | \$3.15 |
| SNI Fem Arc 90 201034 | 1 | No support for cost/invoice | \$0.00 |
| TOTAL ALLOWABLE | | | \$1,436.08 |

The total reimbursement set out in the applicable portions of (c) results in \$4,472.00 + \$1,436.08, for a total of \$5,908.08.

Reimbursement for the services in dispute is therefore determined by the lesser of:

| §134.401(b)(2)(A) | Finding |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| (i) | Not Applicable |
| (ii) | \$46,435.39 |
| (iii) | \$5,908.08 |

The division concludes that application of the standard per diem amount and the additional reimbursements under §134.401(c)(4) represents the lesser of the three considerations. The respondent issued payment in the amount of \$5,288.11. Based upon the documentation submitted, additional reimbursement can be recommended.

Conclusion

For the reasons stated above, the division concludes that the services in dispute are not eligible for the stop-loss method of reimbursement, that a pre-negotiated rate does not apply, and that application of 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.401(c)(1), titled *Standard Per Diem Amount*, and §134.401(c)(4), titled *Additional Reimbursements*, results in the total allowable reimbursement. Based upon the documentation submitted, the requestor's Table of Disputed Services, and reimbursement made by the respondent, the amount ordered is \$619.97.

ORDER

Based upon the documentation submitted by the parties and in accordance with the provisions of Texas Labor Code Sections 413.031 and 413.019 (if applicable), the Division has determined that the requestor is entitled to additional reimbursement for the services involved in this dispute. The Division hereby ORDERS the respondent to remit to the requestor the amount of \$619.97 plus applicable accrued interest per 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.803, due within 30 days of receipt of this Order.

Authorized Signature

Signature

Medical Fee Dispute Resolution Officer

11/1/2013

Date

YOUR RIGHT TO APPEAL

Either party to this medical fee dispute may appeal this decision by requesting a contested case hearing. A completed **Request for a Medical Contested Case Hearing** (form **DWC045A**) must be received by the DWC Chief Clerk of Proceedings within **twenty** days of your receipt of this decision. A request for hearing should be sent to: Chief Clerk of Proceedings, Texas Department of Insurance, Division of Workers Compensation, P.O. Box 17787, Austin, Texas, 78744. The party seeking review of the MDR decision shall deliver a copy of the request for a hearing to all other parties involved in the dispute at the same time the request is filed with the division. **Please include a copy of the *Medical Fee Dispute Resolution Findings and Decision*** together with any other required information specified in 28 Texas Administrative Code §148.3(c), including a **certificate of service demonstrating that the request has been sent to the other party.**

Si prefiere hablar con una persona en español acerca de ésta correspondencia, favor de llamar a 512-804-4812.